



CJ Carella's WitchCraft Introductory Pack



Introduction

Welcome to the demo pack for *CJ Carella's WitchCraft* roleplaying game from **Eden Studios**. Here you will find everything you need to begin playing the acclaimed game of modern magic and dark secrets. Just read through this material, gather some friends together, scrounge up some gaming dice (a four-sided (D4), a six-sided (D6), an eight-sided (D8), and a ten-sided (D10) die), and you are ready to play.

We hope you enjoy your introduction to *CJ Carella's WitchCraft* roleplaying game. Further information on Eden Studios and the *WitchCraft* line of products can be found by visiting www.edenstudios.net/witchcraft.

Setting

WitchCraft is a game of modern horror. The setting is the world where we live—Times Square, traffic jams, karaoke bars, Nokia cell phones and 24-hour news channels. Unknown to most, however, this world is infused with the supernatural. In ancient times, shamans would travel the Otherworlds and converse with spirits, tribes were guided by visions, and invocations assisted the hunt. In time, the shamans became high priests. The metaphysical became more secretive until only a select few had any knowledge of its existence. This has continued to modern times. Secret societies grew and evolved, hiding from the mundane world as they guided their members in the metaphysical arts.

Things have changed in the last few years. Since the 1960s, the number of humans able to use metaphysical powers—the Gifted—has increased dramatically. Legendary spirits and creatures have manifested again, and even become plentiful.

The Reckoning is approaching.

Whether these changes signal the dawn of a new golden age or the arrival of an apocalypse is unknown. The supernatural becomes more manifest each day. The Covenants, secret societies of trained Gifted, become more powerful. Supernatural predators become bolder. Things are getting stranger and more dangerous.

It is an interesting time to be alive.

Cast Members

The following pages include pre-generated characters—Cast Members—who serve as protagonists in this *WitchCraft* Story. They are a mix of Gifted, Lesser Gifted and Mundane.

The Gifted are the most powerful supernaturally, but also the first targets of mystic forces. Lesser Gifted have a touch of supernatural ability, and a fair number of skills and abilities in other areas. Mundanes have no supernatural power, but are at or near the top of human capacity in other ways.

Each Cast Member is affiliated with an Association. Many Associations exist in the world of *WitchCraft*; only a few are touched on here. The Wicce are a loose grouping of “witches,” and their ranks include Magicians (who use Invocations or magical spells), Seers (who possess psychic Sight), and Mediums (who interact with the dead through Necromancy). The Rosicrucians are much more structured, and the majority of them are Magicians. Sentinels are holy warriors who use Divine Inspiration (the power of miracles) and prayer to fight supernatural predators. The Twilight Order includes primarily Mediums who use Necromancy to protect the Living from the Dead. The Cabal of the Psyche protects Seers from the ignorance of mundane masses. A Solitaire belongs to a smaller group, or operates as a sole practitioner.

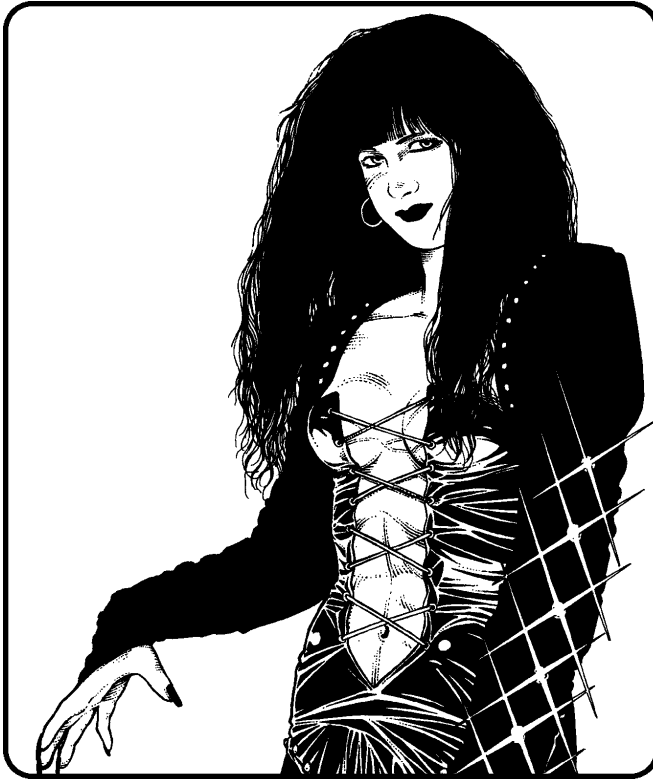
All characters have Attributes—basic physical and mental abilities. The Primary Attributes in *WitchCraft* are Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower. Human Attributes range from 1 to 6, with 2 being average.

Secondary Attributes are determined by Primary Attributes. Life Points (LPs) represent the amount of damage a character can absorb. When a character's Life Points are exhausted they are at or near death. Endurance Points (EPs) show the amount of fatigue a character can withstand. Speed (Spd) is how fast a person can run (in miles per hour; halve that amount for yards per second). The Essence Pool is the amount of spiritual energy that a Cast Member possesses; it is the strength of the character's soul.

Qualities and Drawbacks are positive and negative traits that help round out a character. The game effects of the character's Qualities and Drawbacks are explained under each entry.

Skills are the abilities of the Cast Member. Skill level 1 represents an amateur. A 2 or 3 represents general competency. Extreme competence comes with levels 4 or 5. Higher levels are possible but uncommon.

The following Archetypes are examples of *WitchCraft* characters and are provided to get the group playing as quickly as possible. The Chronicler should hand them around the table or have each player select which Cast Member they wish to play. The players should read the personality text out loud to the group in the order presented below.



Melusine Girodet

Gifted Wiccan Seeker of Knowledge

A tall woman in her late twenties with piercing blue eyes, Melusine has long, slightly wavy black hair, and short bangs—the standard Goth/Betty Page look. She dresses in black and listens to Dead Can Dance.

Melusine is the owner of Hibou Books and Esoterica, an occult bookstore off U Street in Washington, D.C. She is also the leader of a three-member Wicce Coven consisting of herself, Morrigan MacBride and Medea Zeilinski.

Melusine comes from a long line of Gifted Wiccans on her mother's side. She studied at Georgetown University and majored in English Literature. There, she met a Rosicrucian named Penny Woodville who encouraged her to leave the Wicce. Melusine politely refused the offer, but the two have remained friends; in fact, Penny gave Melusine a loan to help her open her bookstore.

STR 1 **DEX** 3 **CON** 2
INT 3 **PER** 2 **WIL** 4

Life Points: 22 **Endurance Points:** 26

Speed: 10 **Essence Pool:** 20

Wicce Special Abilities: +2 bonus to all Invocation Tasks involving defensive powers and abilities; any magical attack against her suffers a -2 to the Dismissal Task (any backlash always affects the aggressor).

Qualities and Drawbacks

Attractiveness 1 (+1 on all Social Tasks)

Contact 3 (*Penny Woodville*)

Essence Channeling 2

The Gift (*allows Metaphysics*)

Increased Essence Pool 1 (*adds 5 to Essence Pool*)

Honorable -1 (*does not lie to or betray friends or people she respects*)

Humorless

Obsession (*must discover great Metaphysical truths*)

Skills

First Aid 1, Humanities (Literature) 3, Humanities (Wicce Theology) 2, Language (French) 4, Language (Greek) 1, Language (Latin) 2, Magic Theory 3, Occult Knowledge 1, Occult Knowledge (Grimoires) 3, Rituals (Wicce) 3

Metaphysics

Blessing 3 (+1 bonus to any non-combat Task for every 3 Essence Points spent; or +1 bonus per 4 Essence Points against one mundane attack; or +1 bonus per 6 Essence Points against one supernatural attack)

Cleansing 2 (*cleanses a room of malevolent energies for 3 Essence Points, or an entire house for 6 Essence Points; if a number of Essence Points is spent equal to those spent on a curse, the curse is removed*)

Farsight 2 (*for 10 Essence Points, caster can view any area within one mile; each additional mile of range cost an additional Essence Point; vision lasts one minute*)

Insight 2 (*for 6 Essence Points, reveals a character's Qualities and Drawbacks*)

Locate 3 (*with 10 Essence Points and an hour of concentration, find anyone or anything within 100 yards; another hour and 15 more Essence Points increases area to a mile; each additional hour and 5 Essence Points doubles the search radius*)

Symbols of Protection 3 (*for 3 Essence Points per +1 bonus, protection is imbued into an amulet against one specific power; for 6 Essence Points per +1 bonus, protection is imbued against ANY supernatural attack; with each use, the amulet's strength is depleted by one; each amulet created reduces Essence Pool of creator by one until the amulet is depleted*)

Possessions

The Hibou Bookstore; the apartment above it (also full of books); a few pieces of antique furniture, including a really nice bedroom set; lots of black clothing; French Art Nouveau prints; every Dead Can Dance CD ever made; a reasonably functional black 1993 Toyota Corolla.



Morrigan MacBride

Lesser Gifted Wiccan Survivor

Morrigan is an Irish woman in her mid-twenties with a full head of red hair and eyes of bright green. She dresses in jeans and dark colored sweaters from her homeland. Morrigan works part time at Hibou Books and sings at the Velvet Lounge on U Street.

Morrigan grew up in Limerick, Ireland. Her mother was a midwife, and the family went south to Lough Gur every February during Imbolc. It was a family tradition to assist the Sidhe, the Fey folk of the Otherworld, with any births during that time. On Morrigan's thirteenth Imbolc, an Unseelie came through the Otherworld Gate. It slaughtered Morrigan's entire family, and took the bodies back to the Faerie Lands. Only the timely intervention of a nearby Wicce Coven prevented Morrigan from sharing the same fate.

Morrigan was sent to live in Baltimore with her Aunt. When she was old enough, she took the forty-minute drive to Washington, D.C. where she met Melusine and Medea. They gave her a sense of belonging that her Aunt was never able to provide.

STR 2 **DEX** 4 **CON** 3
INT 2 **PER** 4 **WIL** 5
Life Points: 30 **Endurance Points:** 35
Speed: 14 **Essence:** 37

Wicce Special Abilities: +2 bonus to all Invocation Tasks involving defensive powers and abilities; any magical attack against her suffers a -2 to the Dismissal Task (any backlash always affects the aggressor).

Qualities and Drawbacks

Artistic Talent (Singing) (+12 Essence; +3 on Singing Tasks; failed Task counts as one Success Level)

Attractive 2 (+2 on all Social Tasks)

Essence Channeling 2

The Gift (allows Metaphysics)

Increased Essence Pool 1 (adds 5 to Essence Pool)

Cruel 1 (would never harm a friend or loved one, but enemies deserve what they get)

Emotional Problem (Fear of Rejection) (very hurt and angry when she feels rejection from a loved one)

Recurring Nightmare (when Chronicler desires or by rolling a 1 on a D10, experiences a horrible nightmare and loses D4(2) Endurance Points until next full night of sleep)

Delusion (Weird) 2 (prejudice against Otherworldly beings, especially the Fey; includes similar creatures, like nature spirits and elementals)

Skills

Brawling 2, Climbing 2, Dancing (Folk) 3, Dodge 2, Driving (Car) 1, First Aid 2, Hagglng 1, Humanities (Wicce Theology) 1, Language (Gaelic) 3, Myth and Legend (Celtic) 2, Play Instrument (Guitar) 3, Rituals (Wicce) 2, Singing 3, Storytelling 3, Unconventional Medicine (Herbal) 2

Metaphysics

Affect the Psyche 2 (influence a person's emotional state for one Turn per Success Level for one Essence Point if the subject was leaning toward that emotion, two points for a different emotion, and five Points for an opposite emotion; target resists with Difficult Willpower Test; alternatively, caster may become more impressive for five minutes per Success Level, gaining a +2 on all Social Tasks, for two Essence Points)

Insight 2 (for six Essence Points, reveals a character's Qualities and Drawbacks)

Lesser Curse 2 (Bad Luck creates a one-point "bad luck pool" for every three Essence Points spent; when something can go wrong for the victim, a point is spent to ensure that it does; lasts until all of the "bad luck pool" is spent, the curse is dropped by the caster, or the victim is cleansed)

Tap Emotion 2 (Essence may be absorbed from those near by; requires a crowd focused on the caster while performing (singing); the first 20 people cost 1/5 Essence Point per person, each 25 after that cost one Essence Point; if successful Invocation Task, one Essence Point for every person is gained)

Possessions

Handcrafted acoustic guitar from the Old Country; casual wardrobe; a rented room in a house near Dupont Circle; a futon; piles and piles of CDs; a bunch of Metro tickets; a variety of herbal sleeping aids.



Medea Zeilinski

Lesser Gifted Wiccan Weird One

Medea is a blonde woman in her early twenties with long, curly hair and gray eyes. She dresses in loose skirts and peasant blouses, but never wears shoes (sandals only) unless it is absolutely necessary.

Medea's hippie parents came to D.C. to protest nearly everything and ended up staying as lobbyists, living in a small home in Annandale. When Medea became interested in the Occult, her parents were pleased. They tend to see through a New Age Feminist filter though, and do not believe their daughter can actually do anything more than create positive energy around herself. They do not believe in magic, per se.

Medea finds that amusing, but she finds many things amusing. She never takes anything too seriously, which makes her a nice balance to Melusine's seriousness. Medea loves working at Hibou and being part of the Coven, and that is all she really wants to do with her life at the moment.

STR 2 **DEX** 3 **CON** 2
INT 4 **PER** 5 **WIL** 4
Life Points: 26 **Endurance Points:** 29
Speed: 10 **Essence:** 30

Wicce Special Abilities: +2 bonus to all Invocation Tasks involving defensive powers and abilities; any magical attack against her suffers a -2 to the Dismissal Task (any backlash always affects the aggressor).

Qualities and Drawbacks

Attractive 2 (+2 on all Social Tasks)
Charisma 2 (+2 on all Social Tasks)
Clown (jokes at times, even inappropriate ones)
Essence Channeling 2
The Gift (allows Metaphysics)
Increased Essence Pool 2 (adds 10 to Essence Pool)
Lazy (avoids work whenever possible)
Reckless (overconfident and impulsive)

Skills

Acting 2, Beautician 2, Computers 1, Dancing (Rave) 3, Driving (Motor Scooter) 3, Humanities (Wicce Theology) 3, Language (Spanish) 2, Mechanic 2, Play Instrument (Guitar) 1, Rituals (Wicce) 2, Seduction 3, Smooth Talking 3, Streetwise 3

Metaphysics

Hideaway 2 (for six Essence Points, human-sized subject becomes invisible for 10 minutes; add 10 minutes for each additional six Essence Points spent; larger objects, like a car, cost eight Essence Points per 10 minutes; really large objects, like buses or planes, are 24 Essence Points per 10 minutes; for locations, cost is one Essence Point per cubic yard for an hour)

Insight 2 (for six Essence Points, reveals a character's Qualities and Drawbacks)

Lesser Illusion 2 (visual illusions cost one Essence Point per cubic foot and last five minutes; auditory illusions cost one Essence Point for a soft noise, two for the equivalent of normal speech, three for a shout or scream, five for a loud noise; to extend sound for five minutes, triple cost; full illusion (every sense but touch) costs five Essence Points per cubic foot and lasts one minute)

Levitate 2 (float self at 5 mph for one minute per Success Level for 10 Essence Points; float other for 15 Essence Points; they resist with Simple Willpower Test; increase speed one mph per three Essence Points)

Spirit Limbs 2 (manipulate objects at a distance for two Essence Points per the limb's Strength level and one Essence Point for every five yards; lasts for one Turn, plus one Turn per Success Level)

Possessions

A miraculously affordable apartment in Adams-Morgan near 18th and Belmont; a Rubino Red Vespa ET2 motor scooter; a wardrobe of clothing bought from various ethnic shops on 18th Street; an Indigo iMac; lots of candles and art; an excellent sound system.



Adahy "Addy" Tucker

Lesser Gifted Solitaire Forsaken

Adahy is a Cherokee man in his late twenties, though life on the streets has made him look much older. Addy is either clothed in a worn t-shirt and shorts, or multiple layers of ragged garments and a long tweed coat that has seen better days. He sometimes wears a pair of mirrored shades that he found on the street a while back.

Addy has only fractured memories of his past. He once had a family: a wife and a little girl. He was once in the Army. There was a period of hardship, and he participated in a Vision Quest (a traditional Native American ritual to seek spiritual guidance). He cannot remember anything more than that. He is not even sure how long he has been living on the streets.

He spends his time panhandling and acting as an urban shaman. Somehow, during the period when he lost his memories, he also acquired the Gift. He can speak with spirits, and he can command them. Sometimes the spirits talk with him, but to a mundane this just makes him look crazy. The Hibou Coven knows him because he frequently sleeps in nearby Malcolm X Park. They consider him a friend.

STR	3	DEX	4	CON	3
INT	3	PER	3	WIL	4
Life Points: 43		Endurance Points: 35			
Speed: 14		Essence: 39			
Solitaire Special Abilities: +1 to all Invocation Tasks.					

Qualities and Drawbacks

Essence Channeling 2

The Gift (*allows Metaphysics*)

Hard to Kill 3 (+9 Life Points; +3 on Survival Tests)

Increased Essence Pool 3 (*adds 15 to Essence Pool*)

Minority (Native American)

Resources (Miserable) -4

Weird Delusion 1 (*memory loss, living on the streets, and talking to spirits has made him a bit eccentric*)

Skills

Brawling 2, Climbing 2, Dodge 2, Escapism 3, Hagglng 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Myth and Legend (Cherokee) 2, Occult Knowledge (Nature Spirits) 3, Rituals (Cherokee) 2, Stealth 3, Streetwise 4, Survival (Urban) 3

Metaphysics

Blessing 1 (+1 bonus to any non-combat Task for every three Essence Points spent; or +1 bonus per four Essence Points against one mundane attack; or +1 bonus per six Essence Points against one supernatural attack)

Communion 1 (*for two Essence Points per minute, aware of everything occurring within 10 yards for every level of Willpower; range increased by five yards per additional Essence Point; +5 to invoke spirits within communed area; able to cast Invocations on anyone within communed area as if touching*)

Soul Projection 1 (*project consciousness if five Essence Points left behind as an anchor; costs three Essence Points plus one point per hour spent immaterial; can travel at 100 mph for every level of Willpower; can only use Gifted powers; sensory and detection powers only work on corporeal beings*)

Spirit Mastery (Nature Spirits) 2 (*summon spirit for five Essence Points, plus 1/5 of the spirit's energy pool rounded up; +4 bonus if spirit's true name known; may form compact for two Essence Points if spirit willing; if compact broken, violator completely drained of Essence (Pool or Vital/Energy) and permanently loses two points from Essence Pool or Energy Essence*)

Mindtime Art 1 (*with Perception and Mindtime Art Task, vision of future events or flashbacks granted; more Success Levels give more detail*)

Mindtime Strength 3 (*short flashes of future events or flashbacks about recent past, up to three weeks ago, are seen*)

Possessions

The clothes on his back; a pair of mirrored shades; a cardboard sign that reads "please help me the government has stolen my family and the cockroaches can't find them i am so hungry and cold"



Clarissa Armington

Lesser Gifted Solitaire Reluctant Hero

Clarissa is a short woman in her early twenties. She has severely “highlighted” hair, brown eyes, multiple piercings and a few tattoos. She dresses like a punk bike messenger.

Her parents died when she was young and Clarissa spent a troubled childhood moving between foster homes. When she was fourteen, Clarissa was sent to a family in Richmond, VA. On a particularly bad day, she decided to run away. To hurt those who had hurt her, she set fire to her room with the power of her mind. By the time she left Richmond, the entire house had burned to the ground.

Clarissa made her way to D.C. and lived on the streets. One day she crossed paths with Carter Williams. He took her off the streets and contacted a friend who owed him a favor, the owner of a bike messenger firm. Working as a bicycle courier, Clarissa has just started building a life.

Lately she has come to the attention of the Cabal of Psyche, the Covenant composed of Seers. A contact person, Tim Shinozaki, has been trying to convince her to join the Cabal. Clarissa is undecided.

STR 2 **DEX** 5 **CON** 3
INT 2 **PER** 4 **WIL** 4
Life Points: 30 **Endurance Points:** 32
Speed: 16 **Essence:** 28
Solitaire Special Abilities: +1 to all Seer Tasks.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Addiction 2 (*light use of marijuana*)

Cruel 1 (*would never harm a friend or loved one, but enemies deserve what they get*)

Emotional Problem (Fear of Commitment) (*when gets close to someone, becomes afraid and pulls away*)

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Checks; acts first during combat)

The Gift (*allows Metaphysics*)

Good Luck 2 (*once per game session, add +2 to any Task or +1 to two different Tasks*)

Situational Awareness (+2 on Perception Tests to sense trouble)

Reckless

Resources (Hurting) -2

Skills

Brawling 1, Cheating 2, Climbing 1, Computers 1, Dodge 2, First Aid 3, Hagglng 2, Lock Picking (Mechanical) 2, Notice 2, Pick Pocket 2, Riding (Bicycle) 4, Smooth Talking 3, Sport (Skateboard) 3, Stealth 3, Streetwise 3

Metaphysics

Mindfire Art 1 (*with Mindfire Art and Willpower Task, flames manifest within line of sight*)

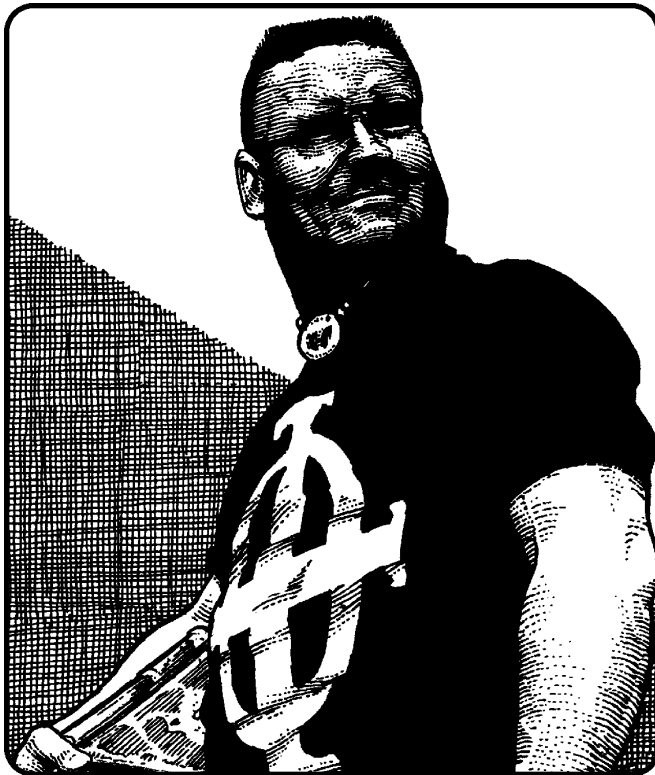
Mindfire Strength 4 (*torch-sized flame does D4 x 4(8) damage and ignites flammable objects; jet of flame does D6 x 4(12) damage with range of eight yards; aura of incredibly hot air reduces Damage Multiplier of any flame or energy attack by four and has AV 8 against other attacks; anyone who comes within 2-5 feet of aura suffers D6 x 4(12) damage; if power used more than a minute, Simple Willpower Test required or flame attacks her*)

Mindsight Art 2 (*with Mindsight Art and Perception Task, sense other's thoughts, or flows of Essence; one Success Level reveals emotions; two levels reads surface thoughts; three levels allows “asking and answering” of one simple question; four or more levels gets a clear picture of the subject's personality, memories, and any information the subject has*)

Mindsight Strength 1 (*must touch individuals to see their thoughts; can see spirit beings and large concentrations of Essence within 10 yards*)

Possessions

A silver Cannondale Road Warrior 1000; a black Nike ACG messenger bag; a Nokia cell phone; cycling clothing; punk clothing; a CD Discman and a couple of really good mix CDs; a small apartment in the less than savory part of 16th Street.



CARTER WILLIAMS

Mundane Sentinel Warrior

Carter is a muscular African-American male in his mid-twenties. He cuts his hair military style and usually wears jeans, tee shirts, and a leather jacket. He has the word “beati” tattooed across the knuckles of his right fist and the word “pacifica” tattooed across the knuckles of his left (“beati pacifica” is Latin for “blessed are the peacemakers”).

Williams grew up in the low-income, high-crime Northeast section of D.C. He ran with a gang at an early age and might have spent the rest of his life in and out of jail if not for the intrusion of the supernatural into his world. His gang’s activities were getting in the way of a Vampyre named Amintore Cavazza. The Vampyre killed most of the gang, but Carter attacked Cavazza, first beheading him, then driving a stake through his heart, filling his mouth with garlic, and chaining the corpse to a rooftop that got plenty of sunlight. Carter would later learn that most of his effort was useless; the sunlight was what eventually killed Cavazza. Nevertheless, he did well for his first time as a monster-hunter.

The supernatural encounter had a profound effect on Carter. His eyes were opened to a world that had been hidden from him before. There were plenty of supernatural predators in the world feeding off of the helpless, and Carter decided to do something about it. It was these solo efforts that brought him to the attention of the Covenant of Sentinels. Carter has now added Faith and the resources of the D.C. Chapel House to his monster-hunting arsenal.

STR 4 **DEX** 5 **CON** 4
INT 3 **PER** 4 **WIL** 5

Life Points: 54

Endurance Points: 44

Speed: 18

Essence: 25

Special Sentinel Abilities: Using Willpower and Humanities (Theology) Task, each Success Level releases an Essence Point; each point confers a +2 bonus on any Resisted Task or Test against a supernatural ability of any kind, including all Gifted Powers and the inherent powers of supernatural beings.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Contacts 2 (*street connections*)

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Checks; acts first during combat)

Good Luck 3 (*once per game session, add +3 to any Task or +1 to three different Tasks*)

Hard to Kill 4 (+12 Life Points; +4 on Survival Tests)

Nerves of Steel (+4 on Fright Checks; only necessary under very unusual circumstances)

Honorable -1 (*does not lie to or betray friends or people he respects*)

Minority (African-American)

Reckless

Skills

Dodge 3, Driving (Truck) 2, First Aid 2, Guns (Handgun) 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Hand Weapon (Sword) 3, Humanities (Theology) 3, Martial Arts (Karate/Kickboxing) 4, Occult Knowledge (Supernatural Creatures) 2, Research/Investigation 1, Stealth 3, Streetwise 3, Surveillance 3

Possessions

A nice room in the townhouse near Catholic University that serves as the D.C. Chapel House; a dented and rusty old pick-up truck, which makes him feel like Fred Sanford; a couple of books on western theology; a really cool leather jacket; exercise equipment; a Wing Chung wooden dummy (the column with the jutting wood bits that martial artists practice on); a Shinai (bamboo practice sword); a katana; a baseball bat; some throwing knives; a Glock 9mm handgun.

Weapons and Armor

Shinai does D8 x 4(16) points of damage; katana does D10 x 4(20) points of slashing damage; baseball bat does D8 x 4(16) points of damage; throwing knives do D4 x 3(6) slashing and have ranges of 3/5/8/10/13 yards; Glock does D6 x 4(12), 12 shots per clip and has ranges of 3/10/20/60/120; leather jacket has an AV of D4(2); punch does (D4 x 4) + 4(12); kick does (D4 x 5) + 4(14).



The Rules

Roleplaying games are still games, and like most games they have rules. The main rule is for the Chronicler and the players to have fun.

Rules are not necessary for many aspects of the game. Simple things like talking or picking up an object do not require rules. Only if the outcome of an action is in doubt and the results of that action are important, do the rules come into play. That's when it's time to start rolling dice.

The ten-sided die (D10) is the one most commonly used in the game; all Tasks and Tests are resolved with a D10. Basically, a player rolls a D10 and adds the appropriate Attribute and/or skill to the number rolled. If the result is 9 or higher, the action was successful. If it is less than 9, the action failed. A higher total value means a more spectacular success, and some actions may be more difficult than others (when modifiers are applied).

Most actions are considered Tasks; these add the values of one Attribute and one skill to a D10. The Chronicler always determines which Attribute and skill should be used for a particular action. Tests are used when there is no appropriate skill. There are two types of Tests. In a Simple Test, the value of the Attribute is doubled and added to a D10. In a Difficult Test, the value of the Attribute is not doubled before adding it to a D10. The Chronicler determines which Attribute is used for the Test, and whether it is a Simple or a Difficult Test.

For example, Keith is playing Sonny Chang. Keith wants Chang to climb up the drainpipe of a three-story building. The Chronicler decides that this should be resolved with a Task using Chang's Strength of 4 and Climbing Skill of 2. The player rolls a 4 on a D10, and adds 6 (the sum of Attribute 4 and Skill 2). The result is 10. Since this is higher than 9, Sonny Chang succeeds in making his way to the rooftop. The Chronicler then tells the player to roll a Simple Perception

Test. Chang's Perception is 3, so this is doubled to 6. A D10 is rolled and comes up 6, for a total of 12. The Chronicler informs the player that Chang cannot help but notice the sticks of dynamite bundled together on the rooftop and the small red display that is rapidly counting down to zero . . .

If a character does not have the appropriate skill, she may make an Unskilled Attempt. This uses the appropriate Attribute (without doubling it) with a minimum penalty of -2. Regardless of the outcome of the attempt, the Success Level is never more than Decent (see Outcome Table, p. 9). For example, Zoe has no Driving Skill, but is behind the wheel of a car. She hits a patch of ice, and the car starts to spin. She rolls a D10 and adds her Dexterity with the -2 modifier to the roll. As her Dexterity is 3, only 1 is added to whatever comes up on the die. She had better roll something high.

Sometimes a character attempts something and another character tries to stop her or avoid the action. This is a Resisted Task or Test. It is resolved as a normal Task or Test, but both sides get to roll. If both rolls fail, neither side gets the desired effect. If one fails and one succeeds, the successful character wins. If both rolls are successful, the better result wins. Ties are rerolled.

The Role of Luck

On an unmodified roll of 10, that result is added to the total. Further, the player rolls a D6 and subtracts 1. This number is also added to the total. If a 6 is rolled on the D6 (5 is added to the total), roll the D6 again. Continue until the D6 result is something other than a 6. Truly large numbers can be generated this way. On an unmodified roll of 1, nothing is added to the total. Again, a D6-1 is rolled, but this time the result is subtracted from the prior total. Again, repeat this process as long as 6 is the result of the additional rolls. This can result in very low negative numbers.

Modifiers

Sometimes circumstances make an attempted Task easier or more difficult. In such a case, a positive or negative modifier determined by the Chronicler may be added to the attempt. The following table shows some modifiers that may be used.

Routine: No roll needed

Easy: +5 to the roll

Moderate: +3 to +4 to the roll

Average: +1 to +2 to the roll

Challenging: No modifier (this includes most combat rolls)

Difficult: -1 to -2 to the roll

Very Difficult: -3 to -5 to the roll

Heroic: -6 to -9 to the roll

Near-Impossible: -10 or more to the roll

Outcome Table

A result of 9 or more generally means that the attempt was accomplished, but sometimes the degree of that success is important. In such a case, take the final result (including all negative and positive modifiers) and consult the table below.

9-10—First Level (Adequate): The Task or Test is accomplished but is nothing special.

11-12—Second Level (Decent): The Task or Test is completed with relative ease and even a little flair. Complex Tasks take 10% less time to complete. Social Skills gain future benefits for the character (including a +1 to further attempts to affect the same people in similar circumstances).

13-14—Third Level (Good): The Task or Test is completed with ease. Artistic results are appreciated by connoisseurs and the public. Complex Tasks take 25% less time to complete. Social Skills gain a +2 on future attempts (not cumulative with subsequent high rolls, only the highest bonus ever applies).

15-16—Fourth Level (Very Good): The Task or Test is very successful. Complex Tasks are completed in half the time. Social Skills produce a lasting impression and have a +3 on future attempts. In the case of combat, increase the damage rolled by 1 before applying the Multiplier.

17-20—Fifth Level (Excellent): The Task or Test produces excellent results. Artistic endeavors lead to fame and recognition. Social Skills have a future bonus of +4. Increase the damage rolled in combat by 2 before applying the Multiplier.

21-23—Sixth Level (Extraordinary): The Task or Test produces amazing results, accomplishing far more than intended. Artists gain fame, but all future accomplishments are measured against this one. Social Skills have a future bonus of +5. Increase the damage rolled in combat by 3 before applying the Multiplier.

Further Levels (Mind-Boggling): For every +3 to the total above 23, increase the Success Level by 1, the Social Skills future bonus by 1, and the damage rolled in combat by 1 before applying the Multiplier.



Getting Scared

In scary circumstances, mundane humans must pass a Difficult Willpower Test; Gifted use a Simple Willpower Test. If this Fear Test is failed, panic sets in. Like any other Test, modifiers may be applied at the Chronicler's discretion.

Once a character fails a Fear Test, use the Fear Table to determine results. Roll a D10 and subtract the character's Willpower from the result. Then apply any Fear Test penalties as a bonus. So if the character had a -4 to her Fear Test, she would have a +4 when rolling on this table. If the final result is less than 9, the character was only scared for a few seconds. If it is more than 9, the Fear Table uses Success Levels to determine the effects fright has on the character. As with anything else, if the Chronicler feels the result is inappropriate, he can always change it to something else.

Fear Table

Success Levels

Effect

1—Shakes: All the character's actions suffer a -2 penalty for 2 Turns. Temporarily lose 1 Essence Point.

2—Flight: Victim runs away screaming for 1 Turn. If cornered, the victim may fight or react in a more rational way. Lose 2 Essence Points.

3—Physical Reaction: Fear causes a messy physical reaction (often involving bodily functions best left to the imagination). Not only is this embarrassing, but it imposes a -1 penalty to all actions for D4(2) Turns. Lose D4(2) Essence Points.

4—Paralyzed: The character cannot move for D4(2) Turns. Only intervention from another character (like a slap to the face) allows her to take any action. Lose D6(3) Essence Points.

5—Faint: The reaction is so severe that the character collapses unconscious. A Difficult Constitution Test is required to recover consciousness. This can be attempted every minute or whenever somebody tries to rouse the character. Lose D10 x 4(20) Endurance Points and D8(4) Essence Points.

6—Total Hysterics: The victim becomes a screaming, babbling, totally useless maniac for D8(4) Turns. Lose D10(5) Essence Points.

7 and up—It Gets Worse: Higher results are left to the Chronicler's imagination (heart attacks or coma, or a bout of insanity lasting hours, or worse . . .)

Combat

Combat is broken down into a series of actions called Turns. A Turn lasts one to five seconds of Game Time. At the beginning of each Turn, the players declare the intentions of their Cast Member. This is where they say, "I want to draw a gun," or "I cast an Invocation." The Chronicler decides if that action is possible in one Turn. Most simple actions are, but if a character wants to knock a hole in a wall with her gun butt, she is going to need more than five seconds.

Everyone then rolls Initiative on a D10 and adds their Dexterity. The Chronicler does the same, or simply decides when the Supporting Cast or Adversaries act.

Once initiative is determined, the intended Tasks and Tests are rolled. Usually, a character may only take one action per Turn. If she wishes to do more, each additional action suffers a cumulative -2 penalty. So the first action in a Turn is resolved normally, a second action taken in that same Turn incurs a -2, a third action incurs a -4, and so on. Close combat (fighting an opponent at arm's length or closer) is a little bit different—one attack and one defense Task are allowed per Turn. Beyond that, the cumulative -2 penalty applies.

In close combat, attacking is a Task using Dexterity and the appropriate skill (Brawling, Martial Arts, or Hand Weapon). If the target has a hand weapon, he may attempt to parry with a Dexterity and Hand Weapon Task. Characters with Martial Arts may attempt to parry a weapon with their bare hands. Anyone may attempt to dodge an attack. If the character has the Dodge Skill, a Dexterity and Dodge Task is used. If he does not have that skill, a Difficult Dexterity Test is required. Attacking and defending are treated as Resisted Tasks.

Ranged attacks use a Dexterity and weapon skill Task with modifiers based on the range. Point blank range adds +1 to the strike Task and +1 to the Damage Multiplier. Short range has no modifier. Long range adds -3 to the strike Task and reduces the Damage Multiplier by one. Extreme range adds -6 to the strike Task and -2 to the Damage Multiplier. Ranged weapons list their ranges in yards, separated by slashes (for example, a shotgun with buckshot has a range of 10/30/50/100/200 yards).

Lighting can affect combat. Poor light (a dark alley or moonlight) gives a -1 to the combat Task. Bad lighting (a moonless night) gives a -4. Total darkness is a special case; roll a D10 and only a 9 or higher strikes the target. If the character makes a Difficult Perception Test, she can add the Success Level to the D10 roll. This signifies the use of other senses besides sight to hit the target.

Multiple shots are possible with ranged weapons. For each additional shot fired in a single Turn, the strike Task suffers a cumulative -1 penalty. All this gunfire can be pretty distracting. Anyone who is being fired upon must pass a Simple Willpower Test in order to carry out her stated intention. Otherwise, she freezes, hesitates, or huddles down in a corner and tries desperately not to be hit.

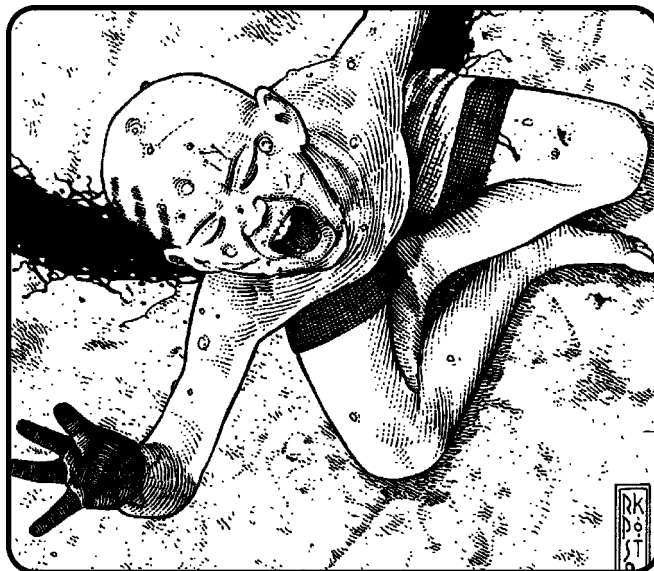
Damage is measured in Life Points. If the Life Points are reduced to 0, the character is critically injured and risks death. Most damage in the **Unisystem** is determined by rolling a die and multiplying the result by the Damage Multiplier. For instance a .22 pistol does D4 x 2(4). The 2 is the Multiplier; the number in parenthesis is the average result (used when the group wants to cut down on die rolls).

Damage is reduced by armor. The Armor Value (AV) is rolled (if necessary), and that much is subtracted from the damage inflicted. In the case of a bullet or slashing weapon, remaining damage is doubled.

The Effects of Injury

A character reduced to five Life Points (LPs) is seriously hurt. All actions have a negative modifier of anywhere from -1 to -5 (at Chronicler's discretion). At zero LPs or below, the character is knocked down, stunned and semi-conscious. A Consciousness Test (Constitution and Willpower minus the number of LPs below zero) is required to remain conscious. So, at -7 LPs, a Consciousness Test suffers a -7. At -10 LPs, a Survival Test is required (Constitution and Willpower minus 1 for every 10 LPs below zero). The Survival Test must be passed once each minute until the character receives some First Aid. Each additional Test is at a cumulative -1.

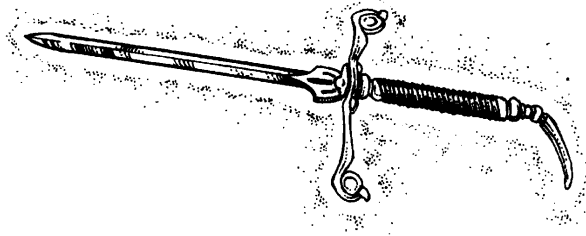
For example, Liz Rosen is shot twice by a 10mm for 50 points of damage. She had 22 LPs and is now at -28 LPs. Her Constitution is 2 and her Willpower is 2. This total of 4 is reduced by 2 (1 for every 10 points below zero) for her Survival Test. She needs to roll a 7 or better to live. If she lives, she must make a Consciousness Test to avoid passing out. This is at a -28, so unless she rolls a string of 10s, she is going to go unconscious. If she does not receive any kind of medical attention, a minute later she has to make another Survival Roll with a -1 penalty.



Recovery

First Aid stabilizes the patient (no more Survival Tests), and grants one Life Point per Success Level of an Intelligence and First Aid Task. Characters regain one Life Point per Constitution level per day until they reach zero Life Points, and two Life Points per day thereafter.

Characters recover consciousness when their Life Points rise above zero.



Objects

Objects have a Damage Capacity. The Damage Capacity is comparable to Life Points. Once that number is exhausted, the object is destroyed. The Chronicler decides whether a certain attack damages a certain object. For example, a man can pound on a car fender all day, but only damages himself.

Objects may also have an Armor Value (AV). This indicates how many points of damage are ignored before Damage Capacity is decreased.

Endurance Loss

Hard work (like running away from an angry mob) can reduce a character's Endurance Pool by one every ten minutes. Very Hard Work reduces Endurance by D4(2) every minute. Frenzied Activity costs D4(2) Endurance every Turn.

Characters also need at least seven hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. For every hour missed, reduce Endurance Points by one. If the character stays awake longer than 24 hours, one Endurance Point is lost each hour beyond 24 in which she stays awake. Thus, a character that has been awake for 36 hours loses a total of 19 Endurance Points (7 for the first 24 hours, 12 for the next 12 hours). These points can only be regained by sleeping.

Once Endurance Points drop to five or less, -2 is applied to all actions. If the character gets below zero Endurance Points, she must pass a Consciousness Test (see Effects of Injury, p. 10) to stay awake. This Test must be passed every Turn, so eventually the character will pass out.

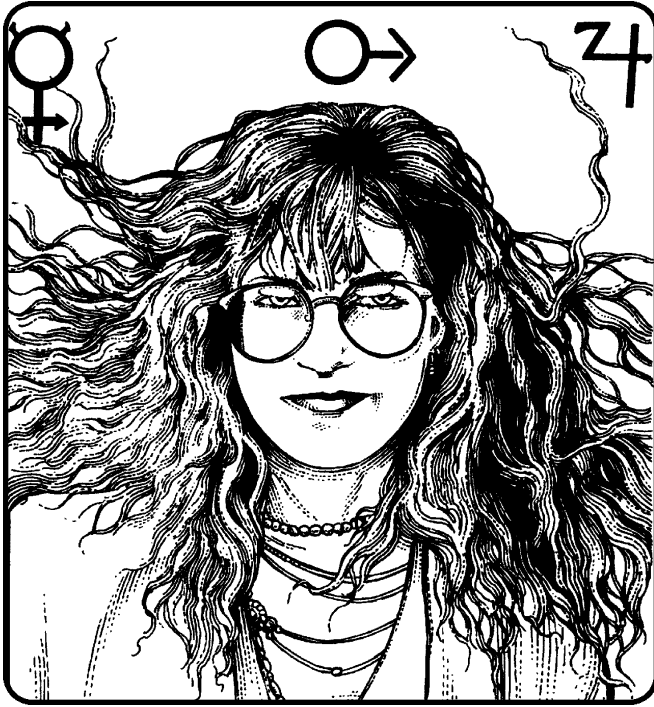
Characters recover one Endurance Point per Constitution level per half-hour of sleep, or hour of rest.

Essence Loss

A character's Essence Pool may not be voluntarily brought below zero. Other effects may involuntarily reduce it below that level.

A character reduced to half her Essence Pool feels numb. All mental Tasks are performed at a -1 penalty until the Essence is regained. At 1 or 0 Points of Essence, the character falls into a deep depression. All Tasks and Tests suffer a -3 penalty. If Essence is reduced below 0, the victim must pass a Difficult Willpower Test with a -1 penalty for every 5 Points below 0. If failed, the character temporarily loses one level in one Mental Attribute. If Essence is reduced to -30 or below, the character must pass a Survival Test (see Effects of Injury, p. 10) with a -1 penalty for every 10 Points of Essence below 0. Characters killed by loss of Essence have no apparent cause of death; medical examiners usually just call it heart failure.

Normal humans regain one point of Essence per hour for each level of Willpower.



Magic

To work magic, the Gifted must use Invocations—ritual actions and words that help focus the Magician's will and imagination to produce the desired effects.

All living things have an Essence Pool. Some among the Gifted have the power to tap into Essence at will; they are known as Channelers. A character's level in Essence Channeling determines how much Essence he can bring forth from his inner reserve in one Turn.

All Invocations require three steps. First, the Essence needed to create the effect is called forth—the Summoning. The Summoning takes as many Turns as are necessary to accumulate the Essence needed in the Invocation. If the Magician can channel all the Essence he needs in one Turn, he may perform the Focus Task on that same Turn.

The Essence is then woven into a matrix (provided by the Invocation) designed to produce the desired effect—the Focus. A Focus roll is necessary, a Willpower and Invocation level Task. Targets can resist some Invocations; treat these as Resisted Tasks.

The third step—the Dismissal—requires no Task if the Focus Task was successful and no malicious intent was present. Using Soulfire to destroy a demonic monster is not malicious; using it to win a bar fight is.

Otherwise, a separate Willpower and Invocation level Task is required. Dismissal Tasks have a base penalty of -1 for every five Essence Points spent (rounded up). If the Dismissal is successful, there are no further repercussions. Otherwise, Random Essence Effects occur.

Random Essence Effects

Random Essence Effects occur in the vicinity of the failing caster within 24 hours. The Chronicler can pick one of the entries on the chart below, or roll a D6 and apply the result.

1 or 6: The original Invocation effect manifests itself somewhere around the Magician. This could be beneficial, harmful or merely startling.

2: An Invocation that the Magician knows suddenly activates itself, fueled by the un-Dismissed Essence. The magical effect appears suddenly and without apparent cause.

3: The Magician is suddenly affected by a fever-like state. He loses one Endurance Point for every un-Dismissed Essence Point. If reduced below zero Endurance, he collapses unconscious.

4: The Essence "grounds" itself on the Magician, who suddenly convulses and then goes rigid. After a few seconds, the spasm passes but may return. One convulsion/paralysis occurs for every five Points of un-Dismissed Essence (round up). Each one costs the Magician D6(3) Life Points and D10(5) Endurance Points. Further, the Magician is helpless for the duration of the spasm (usually 2-5 seconds).

5: Hallucinatory lights and sounds plague the Magician's senses. Mundanes cannot see the lights, but other Gifted can sense the Essence flaring up around him. This effect lasts one minute for every 10 un-Dismissed Essence Points (round up). During that time all Perception and Intelligence-based Tasks are at a -5 penalty.

Using Essence Defensively

Those with Essence Channeling may use Essence defensively with a Resisted Task. The attacker uses the result of his Focus, Seer Art or other supernatural ability Task. The defender uses D10 and his Willpower, and adds one for every point of Essence spent in the defensive maneuver. If the defender is reacting quickly, he is limited by the amount of Essence he can channel in one Turn. If the defender wins or ties, the metaphysical effect fizzles out before affecting him. Otherwise, the Invocation, Seer Power or other supernatural ability works normally. This defensive Task is used in addition to any normal Resisted Tasks or Tests that apply to the power.

The Crowd Effect

One of the reasons the Gifted seldom operate openly is that, when confronted in great numbers, mundanes and their emotions can overcome or dim the powers of Magic through

the unwitting focus of their Essence. This occurs only during very specific circumstances. First, at least ten people must be present; only groups of mundanes can generate enough power to seriously hinder a Magician. Second, the crowd must be aware that the Gifted is trying to perform magic, unless he is trying to affect members of the crowd with the magical effect, in which case the resistance is automatic. In other words, a Gifted character casting an Invocation without drawing attention to himself would be spared unless he was targeting the crowd itself. The amount of Essence neutralized varies by the size of the crowd (see the table below for the specifics).

Crowd Effect Table

Number in Crowd Essence Neutralized

10-20	1 per person
21-50	20 plus 1 per 5 people
51-100	30 plus 1 per 10 people
101+	40 plus 1 per 20 people

All Essence amounts in the table are rounded down.

Sources of Essence

Places of Power: Although Essence flows everywhere, there are areas where its currents run deeper and stronger. These Places of Power naturally accumulate Essence Points, which can be more easily tapped than ambient Essence. Any Invocation performed in such places can tap this extra power. The extra power can also be tapped by supernatural beings, some of which use it to manifest in the area. Haunts, evil spirits and strange occurrences often plague Places of Power. All Places of Power have an “overflow” of Essence that can be tapped by anyone performing Invocations in the area. This overflow renews itself every 24 hours, and it works on a “first come, first served” basis—after somebody exhausts the overflow, no extra Essence is available for the rest of the day. Some Places of Power in Washington, D.C. are described in the following adventure.

Time of Power: Some times of the day, dates of the year and special events have a special significance.

Noon and midnight are the most commonly occurring Times of Power. Any Invocation or supernatural ability performed during these hours (the benefits last for the entire hour) gains an additional five Essence Points. The Full Moon, the Summer and Winter Solstices, the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes, and the Four Days of Power (Imbolc-February 2nd, Beltane-April 30th, Lughnasadh-August 1st, and Samhain-October 31st) all grant an additional 20 Essence Points. Times of Power are cumulative. For example, a ritual conducted during the Vernal Equinox at midnight garners a total of 25 extra Essence Points.

Many symbols also have a great deal of power. A drawn or carved circle attracts an additional 10 Essence Points, use-

able in defensive Invocations only, for those inside it. A Circle also grants five extra Essence to those standing outside the Circle, which can be used for any Invocation. The Pentagram, or five-pointed star, contributes five Essence Points to any Invocation cast within it. A Pentagram inside a Circle contributes a total of seven Essence Points, or 15 Points to any defensive Invocation.

Group Magic

Sorcery is more effective when performed by a group. In the working of Magic, the most important numbers are 3, 5, 7, and 13. The numbers 9 and 11 have some power, but are less important. Gathering in these numbers allows the use of extra Essence Points. The extra Essence from each number is listed below.

Group Magic Essence Table

Size of Group	Increase in Essence
3	45
5	60
7	105
9	90
11	100
13	132

Usually the Magician most skilled at the Invocation(s) to be attempted becomes the Leader of the Circle. The basic steps in casting group Magic Invocations are the same as for normal Invocations—Summoning, Focus and Dismissal. The only change is the contribution of the group to the process. Only characters with the Essence Channeling Quality can participate in a Circle.

During the Summoning, the members of the Circle all contribute Essence to the process. The participants can contribute as much Essence as they wish, limited only by how long the Circle’s Leader waits. Circle members who do not know the Invocation being attempted are less effective, however; because of their inability to visualize the specifics of the Invocation, every two Essence Points they contribute only count as one Essence Point. The process ends when the Leader has absorbed all available Essence, or when the Leader decides he has gathered enough power. The Leader takes the combined energy unto himself; this includes any “free” Essence generated because of the number of participants present. The Leader then makes a Focus Task as though casting the Invocation by himself. When a Dismissal Task is necessary, the Leader gains a +1 bonus per member of the Circle (including himself). These bonuses may only be used to offset the Dismissal penalties (see p. 12); they do not add to the Dismissal Task roll. This helps the Leader Dismiss the often-enormous energies gathered by the group’s efforts.

The Sight

Since humankind gained self-awareness, some people have been blessed with senses and abilities beyond the physical. These powers have long been known as “the Sight” or “the Second Sight,” since many such abilities involve sensing or seeing things beyond the scope of the five senses. The Sight does not require rituals or Invocations, nor does it involve invoking outside forces to perform Tasks; the power is entirely internal.

Seer Powers

Each Seer ability has two elements: Strength and Art. Strength represents the raw power the psychic has. Art represents the degree of expertise a psychic has in using his abilities. The specifics of the Seer Powers involved in this demonstration are detailed in the character descriptions.

Essence and Seers

Characters with Essence Channeling can temporarily raise the Strength of any of their Seer Powers by spending Essence Points. Every two Essence Points spent raise the Strength of a power by one during its next use. Only the amount of Essence the character can channel for one Turn can be used to increase a Seer Power, however.

Holy Symbols

From ancient legends to modern Hollywood movies, the power of holy symbols is part and parcel of many stories about the supernatural. A character using a holy symbol (be it a Cross, an Ankh, or any similar object) to protect himself must pass a Simple Willpower Test. Each Success Level allows the character to focus one Essence Point through the holy symbol. Supernatural beings confronting the charged holy symbol must make a Difficult Willpower Test at a -1 penalty per Essence Point focused through the symbol, or feel pain and fear when faced with it. The creatures hesitate to come near the wielder, let alone attack him. Even if the monster does not flee the power of the symbol, all its actions suffer a -4 penalty.





The False Book of True Things By Thom MARRION

The following adventure can be used by new Chroniclers to introduce their players to *WitchCraft*, using the pre-generated Cast Members that appear in this demo pack. Those Chroniclers who are experienced with the *WitchCraft* system may wish to have the players use their own characters and incorporate this adventure into an on-going campaign. In such a case, the pre-generated Cast Members may be used as Supporting Cast. The adventure takes place in Washington, D.C., and some of the details included are specific to that city. This can easily be changed if the Chronicler wishes to use another location. As long as the adventure takes place in a city that has bookstores and homeless people, it should work fine.

Hibou Books and Esoterica

Hibou Books is located in an old rowhouse off U Street near the culturally diverse Adams-Morgan area of Washington, D.C. The building is three stories tall with the bookstore on the first floor. There are steps leading up to the first floor on the left side of the building's face and a round tower on the right. The front entrance of the building contains the door to Hibou Books and a flight of stairs that lead to apartments on the other two floors. The basement of the building is used as a storage area for the bookstore.

Hibou Books has a variety of old books for sale, with a specialization in works of mysticism and occultism. Rather than the usual New Age paperbacks found in most occult bookstores, Hibou has a number of older mystic tomes. This includes a 19th Century French translation of Giordano Bruno's *Cantus Circaeus*, a copy of the 1903 Gollancz translation of the *Clavicula Salomonis*, a 1945 copy of Turner's English translation of the *Arbatel de Magia Veterum*, and the 1911 Wilder translation of the *Theurgia by Iamblichus*. They also have an assortment of ritual items like candles and crystals.

The Day Begins

The adventure begins on a typical weekday at Hibou Books. All of the Cast Members are present. Melusine is dealing with her normal customers; a man wants to buy a love spell and a woman wants to put a curse on her cheating boyfriend. Melusine has to explain the concept of the Threefold Law and "Doing What Thou Wilt As Long As It Harm None" because the other employees are otherwise engaged. Morrigan is sitting on a windowsill playing her guitar in the "tower" part of the store and Medea is amusing herself by blowing soap bubbles throughout the store.

Clarissa is looking through books about harnessing psychic potential on the off-chance she might find something to help her develop her Seer powers. She is still unsure about going to the Cabal of Psyche for training. Adahy is panhandling in front of the store, and Carter has decided to share his lunch with the homeless urban shaman. Unlike the common Sentinel stereotype, Carter does not think ALL Wicce are evil. He knows that the Hibou Coven tries to do right. He thinks magic is a dead-end path to spiritual growth, but that is not going to prevent him from saying hello and eating his lunch in front of the bookstore.

This part of the adventure can take as long as the Chronicler wishes. It is meant to let the Cast Members interact with each other and get used to the setting before the trouble starts.

The Trouble Starts

The daily routine is interrupted by the arrival of a severely burned man. Half his face is covered in steaming burn scars and running boils. He is wearing what was once a plain gray trenchcoat but is now a charred ruin over the remains of a nice wool suit. He looks like a businessman whose corner office was hit with napalm.

His name is Conrad Stowe and he is a Templar Knight of the Lance. The Knights of the Lance are agents of the Templars who have autonomy to act on their own in pursuit of their Covenant's goals. Conrad discovered that a dangerous occult grimoire was in the possession of a Mafia Consigliere (advisor to the Don) in Philadelphia. Since the man in question was a mundane, Conrad assumed he would have no problems simply stealing the book and bringing it to the Templar Sanctum in Washington, D.C. He did not even let his Covenant know his plans.

Stealing the book was not as easy as he expected. He barely escaped the Consigliere home with his life when he was attacked by a Mad God Cult. Realizing he was not going to make it to the Templar Sanctum, he decided to try for Hibou Books. He figured they might be able to protect the book long enough to get it to the Sanctum.

Of course, the Cast knows nothing of this. All they see is a burned man fall in front of the bookstore. He holds an old book out to Carter and says with his last breath, "Don't . . . let them . . . have . . . this . . . book . . . Danger . . . take it . . . to . . .," at which point he passes out. The Cast Members may call 911; if they do not, then someone on the street nearby does. An ambulance arrives fifteen minutes later. By that time, Conrad is dead.

Any of the Cast Members who know First Aid can try to help Conrad. If they are successful it eases his suffering a little, but his wounds are too critical, and he is still going to die. Unfortunately, none of the Cast has any Metaphysical healing abilities.

The Book

The Cast should be pretty curious about the book. Melusine can identify it with a successful Occult Knowledge (Grimoires) Task. A Humanities (Literature) or a Research/Investigation Task could also be used.

The book is the *Grimorium Verum* by Alibeck the Egyptian, originally written in 1517 and translated into French by Gustave Navarre in 1632. This particular edition is different from others in that Navarre has added a new chapter that details various rituals involving the Mad Gods. There are only five copies of this particular edition in existence.

The title and author are discovered with a simple Task success. On a Good success or higher, all of the above information about Gustave Navarre and the Mad God rituals is dis-

covered. The character knows that there are only supposed to be five copies in existence, but does not necessarily know where all of them are. On an Excellent Result or higher, the Chronicler may allow the character to know some of the locations of the existing copies (this may be used as a lead-in for future *WitchCraft* game sessions and plots).

Meet the Evils

Unfortunately for the Cast, several folks are keenly interested in the tome. A few hours later, Phoebe Day Lightner and some of her followers in the Cult of the Black Flame (one Cultist for every Cast Member) show up. Phoebe has an elaborate tattoo on the left side of her face that is disturbing to look at for long. She is wearing a dark trench coat that she keeps buttoned. A Difficult Perception Test reveals some twitching movements under the cloak (clusters of thin insectoid limbs growing on either side of her torso cause this movement). Her minions are dressed in similarly heavy trench coats.

On a Simple Perception Test, any Gifted Cast Member is able to tell that Lightner's body is being consumed by Taint. Taint is the opposite of Essence, its antithesis; it has no place in our universe. It is the vital force of the Outer Dimensions, the realms beyond our universe where the Mad Gods dwell. A Mundane Cast Member cannot really sense this, but should still be able to tell that Lightner is insane.

The Taint is causing other effects in Lightner. Currently she is trying to talk above a buzzing white noise that only she can hear. She is also seeing the world as a black and white negative with everything about fifteen degrees to the left. When talking, she does so loudly and looks to the side of whomever she is addressing. Her minions just stand behind her and murmur random phrases of support.

Lightner addresses the Cast, "You don't think I know but I do, I DO! I know all about the book, the book, it's my present, it's for me . . . and I want it back because you YOU CAN'T HAVE it . . . oh you think you can but it's a surprise oh it sure is, and when HE comes then everyone will know but first I got to have it IT'S MINE, give it give it give it GIVE IT!!! you have pretty eyes i want to rip them out and wear them as a necklace. no."

She then stares blankly at a space just to the left of whomever she is addressing, spins on her heel and marches out the door. After a beat, her minions follow her.

A Rose By Any Other Name

Shortly after the Cult of the Black Flame leaves, a smartly dressed European enters the store. He is a handsome, dark-haired man who appears to be in his early thirties. He speaks with a French accent, "Good afternoon, my name is Sebastien LaFleur. I am a collector of rare books, and I understand that you have recently come into possession of a

certain text that was translated by Gustave Navarre. This book, indeed all of the French esoterica from the time of Richelieu, is of great interest to me. Let me give you my card. I am staying at the Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel so I have taken the liberty of writing the number on the back of my card. Think about how much you feel the book is worth and we can discuss the transaction tonight. I think you will find it in your best interest to do business with me, no? Adieu."

With a flirtatious wink and a kiss on the hand (assuming that LaFleur is speaking with one of the female Cast Members), Sebastion leaves for now. The card says "Sebastion LaFleur Import/Export" and gives a Paris address. A Simple Intelligence Test tells the Cast Member that the French collector must be paying about three hundred dollars a day to stay at the upscale Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.

A Difficult Perception Test also reveals that any milk or dairy product that was in the Hibou Bookstore went sour as soon as Sebastion entered the shop. This at least affects the cream that is by the coffee machine in the bookstore. The Chronicler can also say that the lunch Carter brought with him included a left-over cartoon of milk that has now soured.

A Family Affair

Once the Cast recovers a bit from the weirdness of Lightner's rant and LaFleur's milk-souring visit, yet another book lover enters the store. His name is Vincenzo Gianetto. He is a tall, muscular man in his late thirties with long black hair slicked back and tied in a ponytail. He wears a dark suit and a black leather trench coat. He is wearing a pair of round mirrored shades that make it impossible to see his eyes, and a tattoo of a teardrop marks his right cheek. He looks angry, "I am going to make this very simple for you. Someone stole a book from us, and we want it back. You give me any grief, and I kill you. Understood? Great. Now where's my book?"

He starts to reach into his trench coat for a 10mm handgun when he stops and suddenly looks out the window. Perhaps it is some sort of supernatural mob ability to detect the presence of federal agents and policemen. He looks at the Cast and says, "We are not finished yet," and leaves out the back door just as two government agents enter the store.

Just the Facts, Ma'am

The last players in the bid for the Grimoirum Verum enter the store. They are stereotypical government agents: black suits, sunglasses, imposing presence, and humorless demeanor. They flash badges that identify them as FBI agents and immediately start their spiel, finishing each other's sentences in a surreal and disturbing manner.

"Good afternoon Ma'am, I am Agent Leonard Smith."

"And I am Agent Bruce Jones."

"We are investigating the incident—"

"—that happened earlier today."

"We believe that it was mob related."

"The suspect that was taken to the hospital—"

"—was connected to the mob—"

"—and he was trying to unload—"

"—a book—"

"—which is a vital piece of evidence—"

"—in an ongoing investigation."

"So if you have any knowledge—"

"—about the current whereabouts of this book—"

"—please let us know."

"We will be in touch with you—"

"—later."

"Thank you—"

"—for your cooperation."

The agents then look around the room before leaving. The police also take statements from the Cast and examine the street in front of the store. They think the burned man was a victim of gang-related activity. If any of the Cast Members think to call the Federal Bureau of Investigation, they discover that there is no record of a Leonard Smith or a Bruce Jones working there.

Let the Games Begin

At this point, what happens in the adventure depends on what the Cast chooses to do. Vinnie breaks into the store that night; if the grimoire is in the store, he finds it on a successful Perception Test. Since Melusine lives above the store, she has a chance of hearing the break-in; and Adahy has a chance of noticing the break-in as well, since he lives on the neighborhood streets. The Cult of the Black Flame begins to gather outside wherever the book is kept, even if it is at someone's home. They are somehow guided to its location, but they do nothing overt yet. The Combine (using authentic but ultimately false FBI badges) Agents patrol the areas where each Cast Member lives. LaFleur attempts to break into Melusine's apartment using Levitate and Spirit Limbs. He is less polite about wanting the book.

If any of the adversaries manage to get the book, the adventure is not over, because the other adversaries try to steal it from them. The Cult of the Black Flame, the Combine Agents, the Mafia Soldier and the Black Magician hate each other as much as they currently hate the Cast.

The only important thing to any of them is getting that grimoire. It is quite possible to play the adversaries against each other.

A Little Help From Some Friends

If Melusine, Morrigan or Medea tell any other Wicce Covens about the book, the general consensus is that it should be destroyed. Melusine might decide to ask her Rosicrucian friend Penny for help. Penny has heard about the *Grimorium Verum* and advises that it be taken to her superior, a Rosicrucian Tribune. This distinguished and wealthy man suggests that the book go to the Rosicrucian Shrine in New York. If Clarissa tells Tim Shinozaki about the Grimoire, he informs the Cabal of Psyche about the book. Word comes down from the Cabal's Council of Elders that the book is to be burned. Adahy's Cockroach Spirit thinks that the old paper looks tasty and that its brood should be allowed to eat it. This may cause the Spirit to become Tainted or it could result in a very old book having cockroaches swarming all over it. This would require a Fear Test at a -2 to anyone wishing to handle the book. Carter should want advice from the senior members at his Chapel House; they want to examine the book and then want it destroyed.

Serious Book Collecting

As the adventure progresses, the adversaries become less subtle in their quest for the book. If things get desperate enough, neither Vinnie nor the Combine Agents have any qualms about opening fire in a public place. The Cult of the Black Flame begins sending Tainted Fire Elementals after the Cast. Sebastian LaFleur uses a combination of Invisibility, Levitation and a really sharp knife to try to separate the book from the Cast Members (or anyone else, for that matter).

Things get more and more intense until one of the following things occurs: the book is destroyed, the book is safely delivered to the Rosicrucian Shrine in New York, the Combine Agents get it and take it to whatever secret Combine warehouse is used for things like this, or someone gets it and manages to summon Nath-Shagraa (in the mistaken belief that this would be a good idea).

If the last option occurs, the Cast should be given one last chance to stop anyone from summoning the Mad God. Only LaFleur or the Cult are even likely to attempt it. The Chronicler can play this any number of ways depending on the Cast and what has gone before. Maybe some not-quite-dead Combine Agents manage to save the day with a well-placed bullet before they die. Maybe Vinnie acts as Deus Ex Machina instead. If things are really going badly, a combined cavalry of Rosicrucian Magicians, Cabal of Psyche Seers and Divinely Inspired Sentinels might put aside whatever differences exist between them to stop the summoning. If the Chronicler decides that no last minute save is going to hap-

pen, then after a human sacrifice and a full day of chanting, the Mad God Nath-Shagraa appears.

Nath-Shagraa is one hundred massive feet of tentacles, pincers, and gaping mouths. This is very bad.

Places of Power

Sometime during the course of the adventure, the Cast might wish to use a Place of Power to help fuel their Invocations. The most potent Place of Power in the D.C. area is the Washington Monument. The 555-foot tall marble obelisk is located in the center of the Mall downtown. It is the tallest structure in the District of Columbia and was the tallest structure in the world when it first opened to the public in 1886. It is an imposing structure that seems to be the center of the city. This is true in more ways than one. The Washington Monument was designed as a Place of Power from its first day of construction. Any Gifted or Supernatural who takes the elevator to the top viewing room has access to 15 points of extra ambient Essence. Rumor has it that the Templars are responsible for creating a Place of Power at the nation's capitol. Maybe this is true. While it is convenient to have a national landmark as a source of extra Essence, it is still a challenge to actually use it. The problem with public places is that they are public, so use of the site might draw unwanted attention.

The White House is also a source of extra Essence. Specifically, the East Room of the White House provides 10 extra points of Essence. That is why the occasional presidential ghost is able to manifest there.

Good luck trying to cast an Invocation in the home of the leader of the most powerful nation on Earth, however.

Another Place of Power near the White House is the Decatur House in Lafayette Square. It also provides 10 extra Essence Points. It is somehow connected to the Death Realms.

Supporting Cast and Adversaries

The remaining pages in this introductory pack detail the various allies and enemies that the Cast may encounter during the course of this Story. Those that remain alive at the end may become recurring characters in a larger *WitchCraft* campaign. They are presented in alphabetical order.

Cockroach Spirit

Nature Spirit Summoned by Adahy

STR 5 **DEX** 5 **CON** 7

INT 3 **PER** 4 **WIL** 4

Vital Essence: 45 ("Life Points" when not manifested)

Energy Essence: 55 (used to fuel powers)

Speed: 15

Spiritus: 5

Powers

Animate (can control 10 roaches for every Essence Point spent; may be used to eavesdrop, scare restaurant customers, attack as a swarm, etc.; swarm may attack one person for every 50 roaches and has a speed of 20; victim suffers a -5 penalty on all actions and D4(2) points of damage per Turn; swarm possesses 10 "Life Points" for every 100 insects; most attacks against the swarm do one point of damage, shotguns do two, flame-throwers three, a can of insecticide D10(5) per spray, professional exterminating spray D10 x 3(15) per shot)

Gift of Survival (for 15 Essence Points, grant anyone five levels of the Hard to Kill Quality (+5 on Survival Tests and +15 Life Points) cumulative with any existing levels for five minutes; for 50 Essence Points, allow a person who recently died (within the last hour) to roll a new Survival Test at a +3 (in addition to any other previous modifiers))

Pestilence (with Willpower and Spiritus Task, resisted by the victim's Constitution Test (Difficult for mundanes, Simple for Gifted), victim is diseased; costs five Essence Points per day; causes victim to lose D6 x 3(9) Life Points per day and suffer a -4 penalty on all actions; mundane medical treatment ineffective; supernatural healing only 1/5 effective)

Spirit (moves at great speeds through most obstacles (one Essence Point per hour to travel 400 mph); able to use Spiritus; invulnerable to physical damage; mostly unable to affect the physical world)

Vincenzo "Vinnie" Gianetto

Mafia Soldier

Vinnie Gianetto is a tall muscular man in his late thirties with black hair and gray eyes. He slicks his long hair back into a ponytail and usually wears a pair of round mirrored shades. He has a tattoo of a teardrop on his right cheek and a jagged scar on the back of his left hand. He dresses in dark suits and a black leather trench coat.

Vinnie is a soldier of the Philadelphia Family. He is in D.C. because the *Grimorium Verum* was stolen from the private collection of the Consigliere (advisor to the Don). Even disregarding its occult significance, the book is valuable because it is 400 years old. The Consigliere wants the prize of his book collection back, and Vinnie has no problems causing great amounts of pain to anyone stupid enough to steal from La Cosa Nostra.

STR 5 **DEX** 4 **CON** 3

INT 2 **PER** 3 **WIL** 3

Life Points: 57

Endurance Points: 38

Speed: 14

Essence Pool: 20

Qualities and Drawbacks

Contacts 2 (*Vinnie knows people who knows people*)

Cruel 2 (*a sadist who really enjoys hurting other people*)

Hard to Kill 5 (*+5 on Survival Tests; +15 Life Points*)

Nerves of Steel (*+4 on Fright Checks; only necessary under very unusual circumstances*)

Reckless

Resources (Wealthy) 3

Situational Awareness (*+2 on Perception Tests to sense trouble*)

Obligation (Major) (*expected to put the welfare of the Family above his own*)

Skills

Brawling 3, Cheating 2, Dodge 2, Guns (Handgun) 3, Hagglng 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 3, Hand Weapon (Club) 3, Language (Italian) 3, Intimidation 3, Lock Picking (Mechanical) 2, Pick Pocket 1, Questioning 3, Stealth 2, Streetwise 4, Surveillance 2

Possessions

Reasonably expensive suit; a long leather trench coat; round mirrored shades.

Weapons

Knife does D4 x 5(10) points of slashing damage; 10mm autopistol does D6 x 5(15) damage, has 10-15 shots with ranges of 4/15/30/90/180; punch does D4 x 5(10) damage; kick does D4 x 6(12) damage.

Sebastion LaFleur

Black Magician of the Sere Rose

Sebastion is a tall, handsome man with long dark hair and gray eyes who appears to be in his thirties. He is actually in his early eighties—the Sadicas of Black Magic has the ability to slow the aging process drastically. Sebastion wears stylish European suits and is often seen in expensive cars with expensive women doing expensive things.

Sebastion LaFleur grew up in Paris where he used Magic as a way to attain personal power. When the Nazis invaded France, he saw collaboration as another means to power. He sent victim after victim to the death camps, but one of the people he sentenced to death was a Romany who cast a minor curse upon him.

LaFleur's activities brought him to the attention of a member of the Sere Rose named Aurelie LaClerc. She made him promises, taught him Invocations, gave him glimpses of her rich lifestyle, and was promptly killed by a group of Sentinels by the war's end. Sebastion managed to escape his mentor's fate and prospered as a member of the Sere Rose. But he wants more. He wants the kind of magical power that would make him an equal of the Old Gods. He also wants to get rid of that irritating little curse that sours milk whenever he walks into a room. Oh . . . and he wants the *Grimorium Verum*.

STR 2 **DEX** 2 **CON** 2
INT 4 **PER** 4 **WIL** 5
Life Points: 38 **Endurance Points:** 32
Speed: 8 **Sadicas Pool:** 75 out of
a maximum of 150

Black Magic Special Abilities: Black Magicians use a special form of Essence called Sadicas that is derived from torturing people. Sadicas can be detected by the Gifted as Essence gone horribly bad.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Accursed 1 (*all milk sours in his presence*)
Attractive 3 (+3 on all Social Tasks)
Covetous (Ambitious) 3 (*must make a Difficult Willpower Test to avoid seeking power in any form*)
Cruel 2 (*a sadist who enjoys hurting people*)
The Gift (*allows Metaphysics*)
Hard to Kill 4 (+4 on Survival Tests; +12 Life Points)
Reckless
Resources (Rich) 4
Sadicas Channeling 5

Skills

Brawling 1, Bureaucracy 1, Cheating 2, Computers 1, Driving (Car) 2, First Aid 2, Gambling 2, Hagglng 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 3, Humanities (History) 2, Intimidation 3, Language (French, Native) 5, Language (English) 3, Language (Italian) 2, Language (Latin) 1, Magic Theory 2, Questioning 3, Rituals (Black Magic) 3, Seduction 2, Smooth Talking 3, Streetwise 2

Metaphysics

Affect the Psyche 3 (*influence a person's emotional state for one Turn per Success Level for one Sadicas Point if the subject was leaning toward that emotion, two points for a different emotion, and five points for an opposite emotion; target resists with Difficult Willpower Test; alternatively, caster may become more impressive for five minutes per Success Level, gaining a +2 on all Social Tasks, for two Sadicas Points*)

Insight 2 (*for six Sadicas Points, reveals a character's Qualities and Drawbacks*)

Hideaway 3 (*for six Sadicas Points, human-sized subject becomes invisible for 10 minutes; add 10 minutes for each additional six Sadicas Points spent; larger objects, like a car, cost eight Sadicas Points per 10 minutes; really large objects, like buses or planes, are 24 Sadicas Points per 10 minutes; for locations, cost is one Sadicas Point per cubic yard for an hour*)

Lesser Curse 2 (*Bad Luck creates a one-point "bad luck pool" for every three Sadicas Points spent; when something can go wrong for the victim, a point is spent to ensure that it does; lasts until all of the "bad luck pool" is spent, the curse is dropped by the caster, or the victim is cleansed*)

Levitate 2 (*float self at 5 mph for one minute per Success Level for 10 Sadicas Points; float other for 15 Sadicas Points; they resist with Simple Willpower Test; increase speed 1 mph per three Sadicas Points*)

Soulfire 3 (*damage is D6 x Sadicas spent; range is line of sight; humans lose one Essence Point for every three points of damage inflicted; corporeal supernatural entities (Vampyres, manifested spirits, etc.) take full damage to both Life Points and Essence Points; Immaterial spirits take full damage to their Vital Essence*)

Spirit Limbs 3 (*manipulate objects at a distance for two Sadicas Points per the limb's Strength level and one Sadicas Point for every five yards; lasts for one Turn, plus one Turn per Success Level*)

Weapon

Large knife does D4 x 2(4) slashing damage.

Phoebe Day Lightner

High Priestess of the Cult of the Black Flame

Phoebe is a short woman in her late twenties with pale skin, brown eyes, and mousy brown hair. She has an elaborate dark tattoo covering the left side of her face that is disturbing to look at for very long, and a cluster of quivering insectoid limbs down both sides of her torso. These were acquired fairly recently.

Phoebe was born with the Gift. She might have become a Magician or developed into a Seer or a Necromancer. Instead, she found the wrong book at a small shop in Rhode Island while her family was on vacation. Her mind was opened to the Mad Gods and by sixteen, she had ritually sacrificed her entire family. She wandered aimlessly around the country, randomly killing people for the glory of the Mad God Nath-Shagraa. At the age of 22, she settled in Baltimore and began recruiting members for her cult.

Nath-Shagraa has contacted her in dreams and told her of the *Grimorium Verum*. She believes that this particular translation contains rituals that will finally bring Nath-Shagraa to this world.

STR 2 **DEX** 3 **CON** 2
INT 3 **PER** 3 **WIL** 2
Life Points: 26 **Endurance Points:** 23
Speed: 10 **Essence Pool:** 15
Taint Pool: 30 (Taint is the opposite of Essence)

Qualities and Drawbacks

Contacts 3 (*fanatically loyal followers*)

The Gift (*allows Metaphysics*)

Increased Taint Pool 5 (+25 to Taint Pool)

Taint (*allows Taint Powers*)

Taint Channeling 4

Taint Marks 2

Taint Limbs 2

Weird Delusion (Nath-Shagraa is the True Deity) 3

Zealot

Skills

Acting 2, Brawling 1, Disguise 3, Dodge 1, Magic Bolt 3, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Myth and Legend (Mad Gods) 3, Rituals (Mad God) 3, Seduction 2, Smooth Talking 2, Stealth 2, Storytelling 3

Metaphysics

Negalighting (*for five Taint Points, all electronic devices within two yards of her, or a specific object within 20 yards, stop working for one Turn; for five Taint Points, make a tar -*

get highly magnetic, small metal objects rush to target, damage ranges from D6(3) (a few coins) to D6 x 5(15) (a bucket of nails) points of damage; for five Taint Points, create shield for one Turn with AV 20 versus metal and electrical attacks)

Spirit Mastery (Tainted Spirits) 2 (*for 15 Taint Points, a Tainted Fire Elemental may be summoned; it is bound to the will of the caster*)

Tainted Touch (*heal self or other Tainted Creatures of D6(3) points of damage for every Taint Point spent; damage normal beings for D6(3) Life Points for every point of Taint spent; no Task or Test roll needed*)

Unveil (*for one Taint Point, reveals true nature for one minute; +3 against any power that affects, attacks, or probes her mind; anyone looking at her must make a Fear Test with a -3 penalty*)

Warpbolt (*for one Taint Point, and with Dexterity and Magic Bolt Task, blast of dark energy does D6 x 2(6) points of damage up to 20 yards away; Multiplier may be increased by one for every two Taint Points spent*)

Weapons

Large ceremonial knife does D4 x 2(4) points of slashing damage.

Lightner's Minions

Members of the Cult of the Black Flame

Phoebe Day Lightner has recruited these fanatics from various bars, clubs and coffeehouses around the greater D.C. area. They are all college students from well-off families who have given Lightner their devotion and as much of their parents' money as they could. There are currently eight members in the cult. Their names are Colin, Daphne, Gordon, Jane, Lucy, Martin, Oliver, and Peggy. They are just average young adults, except for their blind loyalty to a nutcase who is ultimately trying to destroy their world.

STR 2 **DEX** 2 **CON** 2
INT 3 **PER** 3 **WIL** 2
Life Points: 26 **Endurance Points:** 23
Speed: 8 **Essence Pool:** 14

Qualities and Drawbacks

Nerves of Steel (+4 on Fright Checks; *only necessary under very unusual circumstances*)

Resources (Middle Class) 1

Weird Delusion (Nath-Shagraa is the True Deity) 3

Zealot

Skills

Acting 2, Brawling 1, Computers 2, Dancing (varies by individual) 2, Driving (Cars) 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 1, Myth and Legend (Mad Gods) 3, Rituals (Mad Gods) 3, Seduction 2, Smooth Talking 2, Streetwise 2 (skills may added to or modified as the Chronicler sees fit)

Weapons

If any of them get their hands on a large knife, it does D4 x 2(4) points of slashing damage.

Lightner's Tainted Fire

Elementals

Warped Spirits in service of the Mad Gods

STR 4 **DEX** 5 **CON** 4
INT 2 **PER** 4 **WIL** 6

Life Points (when manifested): 80

Vital Taint: 30 **Energy Taint:** 50

Speed: 20 **Spiritus:** 4

Powers

Elemental Magic (for one Taint Point, produce weak, flickering light; for three Taint Points, create strong light or cause flammable objects to ignite; flames may also be extinguished for three Taint Points for a one-yard radius, and one more point for each additional yard radius; striking flame costs one Taint Point to create a jet of flame doing D6 x 2(6) points of damage with a range of 10 yards; increase the Damage Modifier by one, or increase the range by five yards, per point of additional Taint spent)

Physical Manifestation (for six Taint Points, can manifest in the physical world as a twisted fiery humanoid about four feet tall; resistant to physical damage (all damage against uses the equivalent of rolling a 1 on any die); cause four points of burn damage to everything touched and flammable objects are ignited; bucketful of water does D4 x 4(8) points of damage, fire hose D10 x 5(25), fire extinguisher D6 x 10(30))

Spirit (moves at great speeds through most obstacles (one Taint Point per hour to travel 400 mph); able to use Spiritus; invulnerable to physical damage; mostly unable to affect the physical world)

Tainted Burns (burn damage inflicted does not heal normally; without supernatural healing, half of the damage caused by the burn never heals and the victim is horribly scarred; victim's Life Points are also permanently reduced by that amount; supernatural healing and regeneration work at 1/10 normal rate)

Tainted Loss (beings of Taint suffer continually from contact with Essence losing two Vital Taint Points every day until destroyed)

Tim Shinozaki

Cabal of Psyche Seer

Tim Shinozaki is a thin Japanese-American in his early thirties with short black hair, a thin mustache, and dark eyes. He wears khakis and loose-dress shirts, and occasionally, a tie and a lab coat. He works as a psychiatrist at the Saint Elizabeth's Hospital Mental Institution in the Anacosta part of Washington, D.C.

Shinozaki is also a member of the Cabal of Psyche, a Covenant of those with the Sight. Like most members of that Association, he was contacted at a young age and given training with his special abilities. The Cabal is mostly concerned with keeping Seers safe from the ignorance of mundanes. Part of their policy is to encourage only the subtle use of Seer powers. This suits Shinozaki fine; he hates confrontation, anyway.

As a psychiatrist, Shinozaki uses his powers to aid in his work and to help his patients. He is also on the lookout for other Seers that the Cabal can help. He noticed Clarissa in Dupont Circle using her powers and shortly afterwards offered to train her if she agreed to join the Cabal. She is unsure about joining the Cabal, but still goes to Shinozaki for advice occasionally.

STR 2 **DEX** 2 **CON** 2
INT 2 **PER** 3 **WIL** 4

Life Points: 26

Endurance Points: 29

Speed: 8

Essence Pool: 28

Cabal Special Abilities: One free level in the Seer Power Strength or Art of his choice.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Essence Channeling 2

The Gift (allows Metaphysics)

Situational Awareness (+2 on Perception Tests to sense trouble)

Cowardly 1 (avoids unnecessary risks, but fights if cornered or if the odds are in his favor; must pass a Simple Willpower Test to avoid fleeing or surrendering when faced with superior foe)

Minority (Asian-American)

Skills

Bureaucracy 1, Computer 1, First Aid 2, Humanities (Psychology) 4, Medicine 3, Questioning 3, Research/Investigation 2, Occult Knowledge (Seer Abilities) 2, Play Instrument (Piano) 1, Writing (Academic) 2

Metaphysics

Mindsight Art 2 (*with Perception and Mindsight Art Task, sense other's thoughts, or flows of Essence; one Success Level reveals emotions, two levels reads surface thoughts; three levels allows "asking and answering" of one simple question; four or more levels gets a clear picture of the subject's personality, memories, and any information the subject has*)

Mindsight Strength 2 (*may use Mindsight on those up to six yards away; may boost that to 30 yards with Essence Channeling*)

Mindtalk Art 2 (*with Intelligence and Mindtalk Art Task, may project thoughts into another for one minute per Success Level; may defend against mental probes of any kind with a Resisted Task using the Seer's Willpower and Mindtalk Art*)

Mindtalk Strength 2 (*same range as for Mindsight*)

Mindtime Art 2 (*with Perception and Mindtime Art Task, vision of future events or flashbacks granted; more Success Levels give more detail*)

Mindtime Strength 2 (*vague premonitions of important events or vague feelings about places and objects*)

Leonard "Lenny" Smith and Bruce Jones Combine Agents

Lenny and Bruce look like identical twin government agents. They have the same athletic build, same black suit, same gear, and same ex-Marine buzz-cut (the only difference is that Lenny has darker hair). They never smile, never take off their sunglasses, and have a disturbing habit of finishing each other's sentences. They are both agents of the Combine.

The Combine is . . . well, nobody is really sure. It is the Conspiracy, the Illuminati, Them. The Combine is very secretive; it wields enormous influence. Combine Agents have no qualms about using lethal force, and the Combine seems determined to keep the masses ignorant of the metaphysical.

Lenny and Bruce are on the trail of the Navarre translation of the *Grimorium Verum*. Their agenda appears to be to make sure no harm comes to the book and that it does not fall into the wrong hands. Unfortunately for the Cast, "the wrong hands" is defined as anyone who is not a member of the Combine.

STR	4	DEX	4	CON	4
INT	3	PER	3	WIL	3
Life Points:	42	Endurance Points:	38		
Speed:	16	Essence Pool:	21		

Qualities and Drawbacks

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Checks and acts first in combat)

Humorless

Resources (Wealthy) 3 (*when acting in official Combine MIB capacity, increases to 5 (Multimillionaire)*)

Situational Awareness (+2 on Perception Tests to sense trouble)

Skills

Demolitions 3, Driving (Car) 3, Electronic Surveillance 2, Guns (Handgun) 2, Guns (Shotgun) 2, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Intimidation 4, Lock Picking (Electronic) 2 [Lenny], Lock Picking (Mechanical) 2 [Bruce], Martial Arts 3, Running 2, Stealth 3, Surveillance 3, Tracking 2

Powers

All Combine agents have a mental block that prevents them from saying who they work for, even under torture. Metaphysical probes suffer a -8 penalty to penetrate this block. Even if the probe is successful, it reveals only the identity of the next person up the chain, and he also has the same protective mental block.

Possessions

Serious black suits, dark sunglasses, hands-free radio (earpiece and microphone); ID cards that identify them as FBI, CIA, DEA, U.S. Marshals, or Secret Service; a plain black sedan with darkly tinted windows.

Weapons and Armor

Class II Armor under their black suits with Armor Value of (D6 x 2) + 9(15); Combine-issued machine pistol called an MP-16 has range of 3/15/30/100/200, damage of D8 x 4(16) and 16 rounds (may be fired in 4-round bursts, one bullet hits for every Success Level); small knives do D4 x 3(6) slashing damage; punch does (D4 x 4) + 3(11) damage; kick does (D4 x 5) + 3(13) damage.



Penelope "Penny" Woodville

Rosicrucian friend of Melusine and member of the O.C. Cohort

Penny is a pale redheaded woman in her late twenties who dresses like a Cambridge librarian. She looks like the kind of person who should be acting in a Jane Austen film adaptation. She is a member of the Washington, D.C. Cohort, under the jurisdiction of the New York Shrine.

Penny and Melusine met at Georgetown University. Both were Gifted and interested in old occult tomes.

When they graduated, Melusine stayed in D.C. and Penny continued her schooling elsewhere. She recently earned her Ph.D. in Renaissance Literature from the University of Virginia. She is currently living off a very nice trust fund as she decides what she is actually going to do with her degree. She spends a lot of time hanging out in coffeehouses, going to museums, and visiting her friend at Hibou Books.

STR 1 **DEX** 2 **CON** 1
INT 4 **PER** 3 **WIL** 4
Life Points: 18 **Endurance Points:** 23
Speed: 6 **Essence:** 30

Rosicrucian Special Abilities: +2 on any Invocation meant to restrain, banish, or imprison spirits and other supernatural beings.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Attractive 1 (+1 on all Social Tasks)

Covetous (Ambitious) 1 (seeks power as long as it does not break the law)

Cruel 1 (would never harm a friend or loved one, but enemies deserve what they get)

Essence Channeling 2

The Gift (allows Metaphysics)

Increased Essence Pool 3 (adds 15 to Essence Pool)

Resources (Well-Off) 2

Obsession (find lost Metaphysical secrets)

Skills

Haggling 2, Humanities (History) 2, Humanities (Literature) 2, Instruction 2, Language (Ancient Greek) 1, Language (Aramaic) 1, Language (Babylonian) 1, Language (Egyptian) 1, Language (Hebrew) 1, Language (French) 2, Language (Latin) 2, Magic Theory 3, Research/Investigation 2, Rituals (Rosicrucian) 2, Writing (Academic) 2

Metaphysics

Elemental Fire 2 (for one Essence Point, produces weak, flickering light; for three Essence Points, creates strong light or causes flammable objects to ignite; for three Essence

Points for one yard radius and one extra point for each additional yard radius, flames may be extinguished; for one Essence Point, a jet of flame may be cast that does D6 x 2(6) points of damage and has a range of 10 yards; the Damage Modifier may be increased by one, or the range increased by five yards, per point of Essence spent)

Insight 2 (for six Essence Points, reveals a character's Qualities and Drawbacks)

Locate 3 (with 10 Essence Points and an hour of concentration, find anyone or anything within 100 yards; another hour and 15 more Essence Points increases area to a mile; each additional hour and 5 Essence doubles the search radius)

Soulfire 2 (damage is D6 x Essence Points spent; range is line of sight; humans lose one Essence Point for every three points of damage inflicted; corporeal supernatural entities (Vampyres, manifested spirits, etc.) take full damage to both Life Points and Essence Points; Immaterial spirits take full damage to their Vital Essence)

Spirit Mastery (Elementals) 2 (summon spirit for five Essence Points, plus 1/5 of the spirit's energy pool rounded up; +4 bonus if spirit's true name known; may form compact for two Essence Points if spirit willing; if compact broken, violator completely drained of Essence (Pool or Vital/Energy) and permanently loses two points from Essence Pool or Energy Essence; use Tainted Fire Elemental stats without the Taint Powers, replace the Taint with Essence, physical manifestation is a fiery humanoid)

Warding 2 (Base Strength is 5, and costs 10 Essence Points; five points cannot be recovered until the Ward is abolished; Strength may be increased by one per four additional Essence Points; spirit must pass a Resisted Strength and Willpower Test against the doubled Strength of the Ward; if the spirit fails and attempts to cross, it takes D4(2) points of damage and is at a -4 penalty to all actions due to the pain it suffers)



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